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ABSTRACT

This study examined, via a 22-item questionnaire, the perceptual differences regarding teaching and research between 134 administrators and 196 faculty members of 6 Tennessee Board of Regents universities. Study results indicated that administrators' attitudes concerning teaching and research were different from those of faculty members on 15 of the items; specifically, while administrators tended to have a strong emphasis that both research and teaching are important, faculty members felt they need to have particular strength in one or the other. Because of this difference in attitudes, administrators' decisions could run contrary to those of faculty regarding such matters as faculty members' tenure and promotion. A table displays the statistical results for 15 variables. (GLR)

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Perceptual Differences Between Administrators and Faculty Members
on Teaching and Research

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Abstract

This paper examines the perceptual differences between administrators ($n = 134$) and faculty members ($n = 196$) of six Tennessee Board of Regents universities on teaching and research using a 22-item questionnaire. The results of a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) show that administrators and faculty members differ on 15 items. In general, administrators rate both teaching and research as more important than do faculty members.

Perceptual Differences Between Administrators and Faculty Members
on Teaching and Research

In the academic world, "publish or perish" is well known by administrators and faculty members. Research publications and many other forms of intellectual achievements have been considered as important factors in awarding tenure and promotion. Many faculty members are stars precisely because they are busy writing books, articles, and making discoveries.

State regional universities enroll more than 25% of the undergraduate students currently in higher education (Bassis & Guskin, 1986). Although the historical legacy of regional state colleges and universities emphasizes teaching, many of these universities have radically transformed their character and increased the importance of research in recent years (Stark, 1986). On the other hand, a majority of the major leading research institutions have undertaken initiatives to strengthen teaching and learning at the undergraduate level (e.g., a \$7 million program at Stanford).

Faculty's teaching effectiveness is more subjective and qualitative, and difficult to evaluate and judge, relatively speaking, than faculty's research productivity. For major research institutions, research will carry a heavier weight than teaching, whereas for teaching institutions, teaching will carry a heavier weight than research, however, research is still very important. The major purpose of the present study was to investigate the possible perceptual differences between administrators and faculty members of regional state universities on teaching and research.

Method

Subjects

A survey questionnaire was given to 230 administrators (189 department chairs, 35 deans, and 6 academic vice presidents) of six Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) universities in the State of Tennessee and 384 faculty members (a randomly selected stratified sample provided by the Tennessee Board of Regents, TBR). Usable data were collected from 330 individuals (134 administrators and 196 faculty members).

Measures

A 22-item questionnaire was developed for the present study to measure different attitudes toward teaching and research. The items were selected based on suggestions in the literature (Clark, 1987; Seldin, 1980). Subjects were asked to rate these items using a 4-point scale with strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3) and strongly disagree (4) as anchor points.

Results

The results of a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed that administrators and faculty members were different in their perceptions [$F(22, 307) = 10.86, p < .001, \text{Wilks' } \lambda = .562$]. Further univariate F -tests ($df = 1, 328$) showed that administrators and faculty members differed on 15 out of the 22 items (see Table 1).

Administrators expressed stronger feelings than faculty members on the following items: both teaching and research are essential, teaching is rewarded, teaching effectiveness is related to survival, teaching and research are mutually supportive,

universities need to hire faculty with strength in both teaching and research. Faculty members felt more strongly than administrators on the following items: research is rewarded, research productivity is related to survival, and universities need to hire faculty with strength either in teaching or research. Further, administrators felt that they are not researchers and people will devote less time and effort to research if tenure and promotion decisions are not contingent on research productivity.

Discussion

The results of the present study show that administrators' attitudes concerning teaching and research are different from that of faculty members. Administrators tend to have a strong emphasis that both research and teaching are important. Faculty members tend to feel that they need to have strength in either research or teaching. Due to these differences, administrators and faculty members may develop different behavior patterns in an academic institution. One possible implication may be related to these administrators' decisions concerning faculty members' tenure and promotion in an academic setting.

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Table 1

Differences Between Administrators and Faculty Members

Variable	Administrator		Faculty		F	p
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>		
1. Research is essential	1.55	.61	1.78	.79	7.60	.006
2. Teaching is essential	1.07	.29	1.18	.45	6.63	.010
3. Research is rewarded	2.67	.87	2.45	.90	5.02	.026
4. Teaching is rewarded	2.57	.79	2.78	.84	5.17	.024
5. Research productivity	2.85	.74	2.55	.90	10.47	.001
6. Teaching effectiveness	2.30	.69	2.65	.85	16.05	.000
7. Mutually supportive	1.57	.62	1.82	.81	8.86	.003
8. Rewards influence performance	1.89	.71	2.08	.84	4.52	.034
9. Research interferes teaching	2.87	.75	2.63	.89	6.83	.009
10. Teaching offers satisfaction	2.16	.65	1.85	.78	14.31	.000
11. Do less research (T & P)	2.09	.68	2.74	.87	53.34	.000
12. A researcher	3.10	.46	2.95	.64	5.34	.022
13. Both in higher education	2.12	.65	1.77	.71	21.08	.000
14. Strength in both	2.01	.81	2.28	.93	6.89	.009
15. Strength in either	2.24	.82	1.89	.80	15.04	.000

Note. df = 1, 328. A low score indicates high agreement with the statement.